



The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

June 3, 2005

DID YOU KNOW?

- According to 2003 U.S. Census data, **Texas has the highest rate of uninsured children in the country**, with 21.6 percent of children--1.4 million children--lacking healthcare coverage.
- **Nearly ninety percent of uninsured children have at least one working parent.**
- As a result of cuts approved by the Texas Legislature, **CHIP enrollment has dropped by 180,450 children** since cuts took effect on September 1, 2003, from 507,259 children enrolled in September, 2003 to 326,809 children enrolled in May, 2005 (TX Health & Human Services Commission).
- All 326,809 children enrolled in CHIP **lost dental, vision and hospice services.**

THE GOOD NEWS: CHIP HAS BEEN PARTIALLY RESTORED!

- **The Good News is that the Texas Legislature made important progress in restoring CHIP coverage and benefits during the 2005 Legislative Session.**
 - ✓ Dental, vision, hospice and mental health benefits have been restored to the CHIP benefits package
 - ✓ Premiums have been reduced for families and will be more convenient for families to pay.
 - ✓ Additional funds were allocated to increase CHIP enrollment.
 - ✓ A provision requires the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to request additional funding from the Legislature if there is a CHIP shortfall before imposing a wait list, enrollment cap, or cuts to eligibility or benefits.
- **It will be critical to inform families about restored services and benefits.**

ABOUT CHIP:

- CHIP provides low-cost health coverage for uninsured children that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford private health insurance. The top limit of eligibility for a family of three in 2005 is \$32,180--200% of the federal poverty level. Children are covered from birth through 19.
- Benefits include: checkups, doctor visits, immunizations, prescriptions, hospitalization, specialty care,
- mental health, dental and vision care. There are no pre-existing condition requirements.
- Families can download applications at www.texcarepartnership.com or by calling 1-800-647-6558.

For more information, contact the Children's Defense Fund of Texas, 713.664.4080, cdf-texas.org